

MENTAL HEALTH

The **Master of Arts (MA) in Mental Health** is an exclusively online degree program that offers multiple and flexible pathways for admission and completion. The program may be completed in as little 12 months of full-time study or longer through an individualized part-time pace, and is a course-based, non-clinical study of mental health. The course of study offers theory, knowledge, and ideas related to mental health research, social-cultural attunement, communication skills, knowledge translation, social policy, sexuality and trauma. The MA program values and recognizes individual dignity; respects the unique values and goals of each individual and family; embraces inclusivity with respect to race, culture, class, gender, sexual identity, religion, ethnicity, and other social locations; and emphasizes growth, development, and situational change. We teach strength-based perspectives that respect diverse experiences and diverse communities. The MA program is theoretically grounded in psychotherapeutic ideas and influenced by systemic relational perspectives. Students use a capstone course and restricted electives to help shape ideas learned in the program to be applied within their own professional contexts. Additionally, students receive a grounded understanding of the theoretical components related to broadly supporting mental health (which may include foundational knowledge in post-modern and behavioral therapy models, attending and communication skills, and knowledge translation). Other than the capstone course, which must be taken in the final semester of study, there is no order to which the remaining courses must be taken, and students may enter the program in any semester.

Administrative Staff

Chair

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Graduate Faculty

This list may include Regular Graduate Faculty, Associated Graduate Faculty and/or Graduate Faculty from other universities.

John M. Beaton

BA Wilfrid Laurier, M.Div. Tyndale Theological Seminary, M.Sc. Guelph,
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Tuuli M. Kukkonen

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Robin R. Milhausen

BA, M.Sc. Guelph, PhD Indiana - Professor
Graduate Faculty

Orion (Ruth) Neustifter

BA Syracuse, MSSW-MFT Louisville, PhD Georgia - Associate Professor
Graduate Faculty

Admission Requirements

Applicants to the Master of Arts in Mental Health are required to have completed an honours (four-year) baccalaureate degree with a minimum 75% average in the last two years of study and a minimum 70% average in social science or equivalent research methods. Requirements may be in progress at the time of application. The applicant process is competitive, and all applicants will be required to provide a letter of interest.

Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the Master of Arts in Mental Health will:

1. Systemic Relational Praxis
 - i. Understand and apply systemic-relational perspectives and theories across all professional activities.
 - ii. Critically examine literature and research related to mental health and well-being, and develop a knowledge of professional standards of practice for working with mental health issues.
 - iii. Demonstrate understanding of how Systemic-Relational Praxis is related to Integrated Reflexivity and Attunement to Social Cultural Contexts.
2. Integrated Reflexivity
 - i. Engage in reflexivity to grow awareness of one's own processes and experiences and how these may facilitate and constrain interpersonal interactions.
 - ii. Recognize and take responsibility for, and systemically-relationally manage the ways that they are activated in professional relationships.
 - iii. Demonstrate understanding of how Integrated Reflexivity is related to Systemic Relational Praxis and Attunement to Social Cultural Contexts.
3. Attunement to Social Cultural Contexts
 - i. Demonstrate understanding and awareness of social justice frameworks that actively seek and value diverse perspectives.
 - ii. Critically analyze and demonstrate an understanding of the effects of colonization, intersectionality, power dynamics, diversity, oppression, and social locations in the context of professional conversations and relationships.
 - iii. Demonstrate understanding of how Attunement to Social Cultural Contexts is related to Integrated Reflexivity and Systemic Relational Praxis.
4. Foundations
 - i. Integrate knowledge of human development and relationships across the life span and the significance of contextual factors such as spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, sexual, gender, and biological development.
 - ii. Demonstrate understanding of mental health problems and their effects from a variety of perspectives (e.g., trauma, psychopathology, social justice) and how change happens in therapeutic practice.
 - iii. Demonstrate an understanding of theories related to mental health, in particular systemic-relational, strength-based, and an Equity, Diversity and Inclusive (EDI) framework.
 - iv. Recognize and integrate awareness of self in relation to professional role.
5. Collegial and Interpersonal Relationships
 - i. Demonstrate use of clear, concise, and appropriate communication whether verbal, nonverbal, oral, written or electronic.

2 Mental Health

- ii. Demonstrate respect for others and maintains effective and collaborative working relationships.
- 6. Professional Responsibilities
 - i. Demonstrate an understanding of relevant regulatory, legal, ethical, and professional obligations and best practice standards.
 - ii. Develop and apply an ethical decision-making process, and maintains personal health and self-care reflective of the profession.
 - iii. Maintain professional, ethical, and academic integrity in all program activities.
- 7. Mental Health Communication
 - i. Demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively and reliably with a variety of people across multiple contexts in written, oral, and mixed media formats.
 - ii. Demonstrate an understanding of what is required to build and maintain good therapeutic relationships and engage clients effectively.
 - iii. Ensure Safe and Effective Use of Self (SEUS) in all professional relationships.
 - iv. Demonstrate the importance of conducting a risk assessment and safety planning.
 - v. Demonstrate an understanding of the therapeutic process.
- 8. Professional Literature and Applied Research
 - i. Remain current with and demonstrates an ability to critically review current research within the field.
 - ii. Demonstrate ability to critically analyze and integrate relevant knowledge from psychotherapeutic and systemic-relational literature.
 - iii. Demonstrate literacy through an ability to extract information from a variety of resources (e.g., scientific, non-scientific, mainstream and social media), assess the quality and validity of the material and use it to discover new knowledge.
- 9. Policy Development
 - i. Demonstrate enhancement of mental health knowledge.
 - ii. Critically analyze, assess and demonstrate understanding of current social trends related to mental health.
 - iii. Demonstrate the consolidation of learning through the development of ideas that could help influence mental health policy in a variety of settings.

FRAN*6875	Understanding Trauma and Fostering Resilience	0.50
FRAN*6945	Gender and Sexuality Across the Life-Span	0.50
FRAN*6980	Theoretical Understanding of Collaborative and Post-Modern Therapy Models	0.50
FRAN*6990	Theoretical Understanding of Cognitive and Behavioural Therapy Models	0.50

¹ To be completed in the first two semesters of study.

Program Requirements

Students in the MA in Mental Health program must complete a minimum of 4.50 graduate credits, as outlined below:

Code	Title	Credits
Core Courses		2.5
FRAN*6895	Foundations and Research in Mental Health ¹	0.50
FRAN*6885	Culture, Identity and Mental Health	0.50
FRAN*6985	Intentional Communication Skills	0.50
FRAN*6935	Exploring Human Health and Wellness	0.50
FRAN*6900	Transitions in Mental Health Capstone	0.50
Restricted Electives		2.0
FRAN*6221	Evidence-Based Practice and Knowledge Translation	0.50
FRAN*6270	Issues in Family-Related Social Policy	0.50